WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A stereomicroscope comprising:

an illumination unit for illuminating a specimen with the light;

a specimen setting board; and

a fitting member for fitting an objective lens, said illumination unit, said specimen setting board and said fitting member being disposed in sequence on an optical axis,

wherein one of a predetermined a low-magnification objective lens and a higher-magnification objective lens than said low-magnification objective lens can be selected and fitted as said objective lens to said fitting member,

said illumination unit includes a light source, a shield element for cutting off partially light beam emitted from said light source, first and second condenser lenses for converging the light beam passing said shield element on the specimen, and a mechanism for selecting one of said first and second condenser lenses and disposing said selected lens on the optical axis,

said first condenser lens exhibits an optical characteristic of setting a position conjugate to an entrance pupil of said low-magnification objective lens fitted to said fitting member in a position of said shield element or in the vicinity of said shield element, and

said second condenser lens exhibits an optical

characteristic of setting a position conjugate to an
entrance pupil of said high-magnification objective lens
fitted to said fitting member in a position of said shield
element or in the vicinity of said shield element.

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    2. A stereomicroscope comprising:

    an illumination unit for illuminating a specimen
with the light;

    a specimen setting board; and

10   a fitting member for fitting an objective lens, said
illumination unit, said specimen setting board and said
fitting member being disposed in sequence on an optical
axis,

    wherein one of a predetermined a low-magnification

15   objective lens and a higher-magnification objective lens
than said low-magnification objective lens can be
selected and fitted as said objective lens to said fitting
member,

    said illumination unit includes a light source, a

20   shield element for cutting off partially light beam
emitted from said light source, a first condenser lens
for converging the light beam passing said shield element
on the specimen, and a mechanism for moving said first
condenser lens on and off the optical axis,

25   said shield element is disposed in a position of
an entrance pupil or in the vicinity of this entrance pupil
of said high-magnification objective lens as said

objective lens fitted to said fitting member,

said first condenser lens exhibits an optical
characteristic of setting a position conjugate to an
entrance pupil of said low-magnification objective lens
5   fitted to said fitting member in a position of said shield
element or in the vicinity of said shield element.

3. A stereomicroscope comprising:
an illumination unit for illuminating a specimen
10   with the light;
a specimen setting board;
a fitting member for fitting an objective lens; and
a zoom lens, said illumination unit, said specimen
setting board, said fitting member and said zoom lens
15   being disposed in sequence on a optical axis,
wherein said zoom lens includes a movable lens
movable in a direction of the optical axis in order to
change a magnification,
said illumination unit includes a light source, and
20   a shield element for cutting off partially light beam
emitted from said light source, and
said shield element is disposed in a position
conjugate to the entrance pupil or in the vicinity of this
entrance pupil of said objective lens when said zoom lens
25   exhibits the lowest magnification.

4. A stereomicroscope according to claim 1, wherein

said illumination unit includes a ~~third condenser~~ *collector* lens
disposed between said light source and said shield element,
and

said ~~third condenser~~ *collector* lens forms an image of said

5   light source in a position of said shield element.

5. A stereomicroscope according to claim 1, wherein
a reflecting element for bending the optical axis is
disposed in the position of said shield element of said

10   illumination unit, and
said shield element has a cover member for covering
a part of a reflecting surface of said reflecting element.

6. A stereomicroscope according to claim 5, wherein

15   said shield element includes a mechanism for increasing
and decreasing a covered area of the reflecting surface
by feeding out and drawing in said cover member above the
reflective surface in order to adjust a quantity of the
light beam to be cut off.

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7. A stereomicroscope according to claim 4, wherein
a reflecting element for bending the optical axis is
disposed between said shield element and said first or
second condenser lens.

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8. A stereomicroscope according to claim 4, wherein
said shield element includes a stretchable light shield

member and a mechanism for stretching and contracting said
light shield member.

     9. A stereomicroscope according to claim 1, wherein
a converging angle of the light beam converged by said
second condenser lens is larger than an aperture angle
of said high-magnification objective lens.

     10. A stereomicroscope according to claim 5, wherein
a reflectance of a front end portion of said cover member
is larger than reflectances of other portions thereof.